

DEFINITIONS

- *Covenantal Baptism*
- *Credo Baptism*

WAYS FORWARD

- Early Church history
- The Reformers
- Theologians
- Current Church Leaders

➔ Worth thinking about!

- Bible Covenants
- Bible texts

- Children in God's plans

Questions:

1. THE CHILDREN OF GOD'S PEOPLE ARE IN GOD'S PEOPLE

A. GOD WORKS WITH HOUSEHOLDS

1. God always deals with people in households

Acts 3:25 (ESV)

²⁵You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

- a. Cornelius: Acts 10:47-48; 11:14
- b. Lydia: Acts 16:15)
- c. The Philippian jailer: Acts 16:31-34
- d. Crispus: Acts 18:8
- e. Stephanas: 1 Corinthians 1:16

Ephesians 5:25-27; 6:4

2. Jesus comes to restore families

Luke 1:17

17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

3. Children are holy if one of their parents is a believer

1 Corinthians 7:14.

14 For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

4. Children can be elect in the womb

- a. Jacob: Romans 9:11-13
- b. The Servant: Isaiah 49:1, 5
- c. Jeremiah: Jeremiah 1:5
- d. Paul: Galatians 1:15¹
- e. David: Psalm 22:10

5. Children can have faith

Luke 1:44.

44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

Psalm 22:9

Ephesians 2:8; John 3:8

6. Children are gifts from God to believers

Psalm 127

3 Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. 4 Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. 5 Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

B. BECOMING GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Children shared the Passover meal

Exodus 12:26

¹ In Paul's case, the effectual call came a lot later!

2. Children were certainly included in the Exodus

Exodus 12:37

3. Children are part of the covenants

Deuteronomy 29:10-15

Genesis 17:7

4. Children are welcomed by Jesus: the kingdom belongs to them.

Matthew 19:13-15

13 Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." 15 When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

See also Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17

5. Adults are to become like children, not children like adults

Matthew 19:3-5

3 And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.

See also: Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9:46-48

6. Children have angels looking after them!

Matthew 18:10

10 "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

C. LIFE AS GOD'S PEOPLE

1. Children were part of the gatherings of God's people

Joel 2:16

16 Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast

Acts 2:15

15 But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray.

See also: Exodus 10:9; Exodus 34:23; Deuteronomy 12:7; 16:11; Joshua 8:35; 1 Samuel 1:4; 2 Chronicles 20:13; Ezra 8:21; Nehemiah 12:43.

2. Children shared in the festivals

E.g. 1 Samuel 1:1-4; Luke 2:41-42

3. Children praise God and Jesus

Matthew 21:15-16

15 But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant. 16 "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him. "Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, "'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise' ?

See also: Psalm 8:1-2

Luke 1:44

4. Children are taught as part of the church family

Psalm 78:4-6

Deuteronomy 31:12

12 Assemble the people--men, women and children, and the aliens living in your towns--so they can listen and learn to fear the LORD your God and follow carefully all the words of this law

Colossians 3:20

20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

See also: Deuteronomy 29:10-14; 2 Chronicles 20:5-6, 13; Ephesians 6:4.

5. Children were there for the reading of Paul's letters

See: Colossians 1:2; 3:20 (and Laodicea: Colossians 4:16).²

Ephesians 1:1; 6:1

1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus...

6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

6. Children are to please the Lord and are in the Lord

Colossians 3:20 Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right

Children are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Westminster Confession says the visible church is:

All those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children.

² And in other places, since Ephesians was a 'round robin' letter to many different churches.

2. THE CHILDREN OF GOD'S PEOPLE ARE IN GOD'S PROMISES

a. The purpose of marriage: godly offspring

Malachi 2:15

15 Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

b. God promises to bless families

Genesis 6:18

Genesis 17:7

Deuteronomy 7:9

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.

See also Deuteronomy 5:9-10

c. God doesn't change and so his promises about children don't change either

Psalm 102:25-28

25 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. 26 They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. 27 But you remain the same, and your years will never end. 28 The children of your servants will live in your presence; their descendants will be established before you.

d. The New Covenant is better than the old, not worse

Hebrews 8:6

Here's Deuteronomy 30:6 (ESV)

6 And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

e. The New Covenant fulfils the promises of the Old Covenant

Genesis 17:7-9

7 I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. 8 The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God. 9 Then God said to Abraham, "As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come."

Galatians 3:14

...¹⁴ so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Acts 3:25 ESV

²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.'

Acts 2:38-39

Genesis 15:6, Romans 4

f. The New Covenant promises in the Old Testament

Ezekiel 37:24-27

24 'My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. 25 They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children and their children's children will live there for ever, and David my servant will be their prince for ever. 26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them for ever. 27 My dwelling-place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Isaiah 59:21

21 As for me, this is my covenant with them, says the LORD. My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and for ever, says the LORD.

Isaiah 65:23

23 They will not toil in vain or bear children doomed to misfortune; for they will be a people blessed by the LORD, they and their descendants with them.

g. How the New Testament considers the Old Testament promises

Psalms 103:17-18

17 But from everlasting to **everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children—**

18 with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts.

Luke 1:46-50

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.

50 **His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.**

Luke 1:54-55

54 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful.

55 to Abraham and his descendants for ever, even as he said to our fathers.

Ephesians 6:1-4

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 Honour your father and mother— which is the first commandment with a promise— 3 that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. 4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 2:11-13

11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called uncircumcised by those who call themselves the circumcision (that done in the body by the hands of men)— 12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the

FINAL CONCLUSION:

What next?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What next as a Church?

FINAL FINAL CONCLUSION

Children of believers are in God's people unless and until they choose to leave.
Not: children of believers are *out* of God's people unless and until they choose to enter.

God welcomes the children of His children.